



File Code: 6320

Date: 23 Sep 2009

Subj: 2010-2012 Incident Blanket Purchase Agreements (IBPA's) for Engines, and Tenders (Tactical and **Support**)

Dear Vendor:

Thank you for your interest in doing business in support of emergency operations in the Great Basin and Rocky Mountain Geographic areas. Vendors play a key role in assisting the agencies in delivering their mission. Therefore, we are providing you with valuable information pertaining to pre-season incident agreements. If you do not participate and do not have plans to participate in these types of agreements, you may disregard this letter.

In 2009 the Forest Service implemented the Virtual Incident Procurement (VIPR) system. VIPR enables electronic management of pre-season incident procurement information, including: enabling electronic submission of offers, automating award using electronic signatures, and creating dispatch priority lists. You can obtain current information on VIPR from the VIPR website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/vipr.php>.

Over the next few years, all Forest Service pre-season agreements will be created, modified, and stored in VIPR. VIPR requires that vendors have access to a computer and the Internet. In 2009, vendors with the following equipment utilized VIPR: water handling equipment (e.g. engines, water tenders-tactical), clerical support units, fallers, gray water trucks, GIS units, hand wash units, mechanic with service truck, mobile laundry, portable toilets, potable water trucks, and refrigeration trailers.

In 2010 and 2011, additional Forest Service pre-season IBPA's will be created, modified, and stored in VIPR. Therefore, the requirements described below apply now to vendors with equipment that will be entered into VIPR for the 2010 fire season. This will include engines, tenders (tactical and **support**).

Support tender agreements previously awarded by the BLM will now be included in the water handling solicitation that will be issued by this office in January 2010. It is anticipated that the solicitation will be posted to FedBizOps early January.

In order to protect your information, VIPR will include rigorous system security. The Forest Service is aware of concerns about entering certain information into an electronic application and has addressed these concerns, in part, by requesting the absolute minimum information necessary to execute and manage an agreement. For example, you will not be asked to provide your taxpayer identification number (TIN or SSN).

Users play a key role in ensuring that information requested for VIPR is protected. The government now requires a higher level of security for information transmitted by individuals to



the government for electronic business (including that conducted by VIPR). Therefore, the Forest Service will require secure user accounts through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Level 2 eAuthentication system. Only individuals from your company who plan to *sign* the pre-season incident agreement(s) must obtain a Level 2 eAuthentication account. The Level 2 credentials go beyond simply applying for an account online - Level 2 also ensures that your identity is verified in-person, and by doing so, helps prevent identity theft or fraud.

The Forest Service has prepared numerous resources to assist vendors in obtaining a Level 2 eAuthentication account, which are posted to the Forest Service Incident Procurement (IP) website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/business/incident/eauth.php>.

Depending on whether you've used the USDA eAuthentication system before, there are different processes that you will need to follow to obtain a Level 2 account. Please read the descriptions below to determine which eAuthentication resource to use:

- If you have never used the USDA eAuthentication application before, use the training guide called "Creating a New eAuthentication Account."
- If you have a Level 1 eAuthentication account (e.g. the accounts used for the Equipment and Training Inventory System), use the training guide called "Upgrading an Existing Level 1 Account."
- If you have a Level 2 eAuthentication account (e.g. to access another USDA system), no action is required. USDA Level 2 eAuthentication accounts are universal, and work with many systems at a variety of USDA agencies.

If you have an eAuthentication account, but are unsure of whether its Level 1 or Level 2, consider whether you visited a USDA Service Center to have your account activated. If you did not visit a Service Center to have your account activated, your account is Level 1, and you will need to upgrade it to Level 2 to use VIPR.

Vendors who are creating a new account or upgrading an existing account will need to visit a USDA Service Center or Forest Service Local Registration Authority to have their identity verified after completing the online requirements for eAuthentication. A list of Service Center and LRA locations is provided on the IP website provided above. Additional information on the LRA role and the requirements for verification of your identity are included in the training guides. Please note that you must call the LRA to make an appointment prior to visiting the office to present your identification.

Once you have completed the activities described in the applicable training guide, your Level 2 account will be activated and you will be authorized to access VIPR. We are notifying you of this requirement in advance of when you will need to access VIPR (Jan 2010) to provide you with maximum flexibility to plan and accomplish the important step of obtaining your Level 2 account. We encourage vendors who will use VIPR in 2010 to obtain your Level 2 account by **30 November, 2009.**

Contractor Performance System (CPS). Beginning in 2008, performance evaluations for incident vendors have been entered into the National Institutes of Health (NIH) CPS. This performance information will be used in past performance evaluations for future procurements,

and to monitor performance throughout the agreement year. Vendors must register in CPS, at <http://cps.od.nih.gov/>. Once at the site, click on the “Contractor Information” tab; then click on “CPS Contractor Registration” to complete the registration. Registering will enable you to review and respond to your performance evaluations. Vendors who participated in the 2009 fire season should register in CPS by **30 November, 2009**.

As a reminder vendors are required to update their profiles in Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database at <http://www.ccr.gov> in conjunction with electronic annual representations and certifications via the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA) at <http://orca.bpn.gov>, as necessary, **but at least annually**. The CCR & ORCA profiles are effective until one year from date of submission or update to ORCA. Failure to update CCR & ORCA will delay the award of your IBPA.

Any questions may be addressed to Tom Underwood at 801-625-5764 or myself at 801-625-5811.

Sincerely,

/S/

SUE HUSTON
Contracting Officer